

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

**Remarks Honoring the Victims of and First Responders to the Shootings in
Lewiston, Maine**

November 3, 2023

Governor Mills, Mr. Mayor, Senator Collins, Senator King, and Charlene [Chellie; White House correction] Pingree—look, he couldn't be here, but I also want to acknowledge Representative Jared Golden—and to all the people of Maine: We've done—Jill and I have done too many of these. Jill and I are here, though, on behalf of the American people to grieve with you and to make sure you know that you're not alone.

We just visited a memorial at the restaurant, and we're here at the bowling alley where we met with the first responders standing behind me. You know, we'll never forget the trauma they experienced. And as I said, I can't express how much we appreciate what you did.

And also, the members from the—the nurses and docs in the hospital who took care of these folks, I don't know how they do it.

We're also meeting with survivors and families of the victims who have—will never quite be the same. No pain's the same. But we know what it's like to lose a piece of our soul, and the depths of a loss is so profound. Some of us have been there.

Eighteen precious souls stolen. Thirteen wounded. Children, grandchildren, spouses, siblings, parents, grandparents, bowling coaches, union workers, beloved members of advocates and friends of Lewiston's deaf and hard-of-hearing community. All of them lived lives of love and service and sacrifice.

We also remember the survivors who will forever carry the memories and the physical and emotional scars of this. They should be embraced. And I know you will, and I know you do.

You know, as we mourn today in Maine, this tragedy opens a painful—painful wounds all across the country. Too many Americans have lost loved ones or survived the trauma of gun violence.

I know because Jill and I have met with them in Buffalo, in Uvalde, in Monterey Park, in Sandy Hook, in all—anyway, too many to count—too many to count—from places that never make the news all across America.

It's about bringing people together, different voices and perspectives, for an honest conversation on what's to be a long road to recovery. You know—and I've been at this a long time, and I know consensus is ultimately possible.

This is about commonsense, reasonable, and responsible measures to protect our children, our families, our communities. Because, regardless of our politics, this is about protecting our freedom to go to a bowling alley, a restaurant, a school, a church without being shot and killed.

Let me close with this. Scripture says, "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit." "And saves the crushed in spirit." Our prayer is that the crushed in spirit survive this more rapidly than otherwise.

You know, as we gather here today, we know your hearts are broken because—but we also know your spirits are strong. The way this community has come together, the way this State has come together has been a marvel to the rest of the country.

So God bless those we lost and those who have been wounded, and may God bless the first responders, as well as the nurses.

I told the nurses, docs, if there's any angels in Heaven, male and female nurses are the ones that are in Heaven. Docs let you live; nurses want—make you want to live. For a guy that spent a lot of time in ICU. So thank you, thank you, thank you.

Now I'd like to invite Senator Collins to come up and say a few words, as well.

Senator.

[At this point, Sens. Susan M. Collins and Angus S. King, Sr., Rep. Chellie M. Pingree, and Gov. Janet T. Mills of Maine made remarks. No transcript was provided.]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:02 p.m. outside the Just-in-Time Recreation bowling center, restaurant, and event venue. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Carl L. Sheline of Lewiston, who introduced the President. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 4.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Lewiston, ME, shootings, honoring victims and first responders.

Locations: Lewiston, ME.

Names: Biden, Jill T.; Collins, Susan M.; Golden, Jared F.; King, Angus S., Sr.; Mills, Janet T.; Pingree, Chellie M.; Sheline, Carl L.

Subjects: First responders, service and dedication; Gun violence, prevention efforts; Health care workers, service and dedication; Maine, Governor; Maine, President's visit; Maine, shootings in Lewiston.

DCPD Number: DCPD202300976.